



# Societal Empowerment and Resistance to The Tourism Development in Bono Tidal Bore Indonesia

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## Abstract

The study aims to analyze the pattern of society empowerment and resistance to the tourism development in Bono Tidal Bore, Pelalawan Regency, Indonesia. This study uses qualitative method approach. The result of the study shows that capacity building is urgently required. This includes two things, they are: (a) improve society's formal education level, (b) increase informal education institution and its accessibility. The result of the study shows that cultural shock is possible to occur in the society of Teluk Meranti because of Bono tourism development intensification.

*Keywords: tourism, bono, empowerment, resistance.*

## 1. Introduction

Using The study about the development strategy of Bono tourism (Tidal Bore) which is done by Hidir, et al in 2013 found that the problem of tourism in Teluk Meranti are the diversification problem of tourism object and integrated management based on the social, political, economic and culture strengths of Teluk Meranti government. Therefore, the pattern of tourism development must be based on society's empowerment model. It is based on assumptions about Teluk Meranti area that is resting on society's empowerment model. The basic consideration models are (1) environment conservation aspect and (2) society's empowerment aspect.

It is admitted that the tourism development in the society is not an easy thing. To go to that direction, society is suppose to do it itself. As far as can be observed and monitored from the study found that there is relation between social environment, physic and infrastructure in the tourism development in Teluk Meranti.

The problems of the study focus on:

- What kind of empowerment effort that must be done toward society as initial step to advance and to prepare them in facing tourism in their area?
- What is the step to anticipate resistance that come from the society as an effect of their economic urgency?

The objectives of the study are:

- Promote and prepare society to face tourism development in Pelalawan Regency.
- Supress possibility of society's resistant in relation with tourism development impact.

The benefits of the study are:

- Input for development direction and village economic improvement (pro poor) in the future according to sustainable development concept with society dynamic and ecological change that happen.
- Input for anticipation from resistance pattern that may appear as the effect of society's unpreparedness in facing tourism development in their area.

## 2. Results and Discussions

Tourism activity has wide aspect and also has various understanding. However, if it is related to the wide range, tourism involves many other social aspects which are related to the tourism sector as stated by [1] below:

*"Sociology of tourism is an emergent specialty concerned with the study of touristic motivations, roles, relationships, and institutions and their impact on tourists and on the societies who receives them".*

Tourists consist of local tourists and foreign tourists. To create tourism visit there must be tourism product that is offered.

*"Generally, product is a complex characteristic whether it is touchable or untouchable including packaging, colour, price, company and retailer prestige, and company service which are accepted by the buyers to satisfy their desires and needs".*

For the progress of the society which is affected by this development, society's empowerment is not just to fulfil the basic needs or to provide prevention mechanism for the further development process. What is also important is effort to find as what stated by [2] in [3], which is called alternative development which require inclusive democracy, appropriate economic growth, gender equality

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and intergenerational equality. It means that empowerment paradigm demands approach that does not position society as object from various development projects, but it has to position society as subject of the development effort itself.

By using this approach, it is expected the development models that more participative will be created so the contribution of society is not only marked in form of money, power and other unnatural but also must present initiative element and determination that are really grow from the society.

### 2.1. Society of Teluk Meranti empowerment

Based on the study of [4], existing condition of society in the context of Bono tourism development in Teluk Meranti is as follow:

Above description shows that human resources aspect has not given added value for Bono tourism development process in Teluk Meranti. Besides that, cultural values and manifestation in Teluk Meranti actually can be attraction that can be managed to support Bono natural tourism. Many kind forms of Malayan culture that is still pure and still done by the local society if it is packed with the right packaging will bring Teluk Meranti becomes Bali in Sumatera Island.

The problem now is the people of Teluk Meranti who supposed to be subject of Bono tourism development until now still become object of Bono tourism development. The people are placed in the position of taken for granted for all form of development, change and other dynamics without having “voice” or “power” to participate proactively in many dynamics of the bono tourism development.

Therefore it is not surprising that then the main point of [4] findings emphasize on the urgency that the development of Bono tourism must be done based on society empowerment.

Referring from the situation analysis and problem identification above, society empowerment model is done as a form of self preparation of Teluk Meranti society in facing the development of tourism in Teluk Meranti.

Society empowerment effort that is recommended in this study emphasizes on how to increase individual capacity of Teluk Meranti's society so they can be more competitive and also become the main actor of Bono tourism development. Capacity building is urgently to be done by targeting on education sector as the problem root and central point toward better empowerment of Teluk Meranti's society in the future.

Therefore, to prepare Teluk Meranti's society in facing bono tourism development, capacity building that needs to be done includes two things; they are (a) improvement of society's formal education level, (b) increase informal education institution and its accessibility. By increasing quality and quantity of formal and informal education, it is expected that it will give skill and expertise for society. The ability to speak English is absolute and urgent for the society of Teluk Meranti considering that many tourists who come there are foreign tourists who cannot speak Indonesian or Malay or Minang language (Most of the society in Teluk Meranti more proficient to speak in Malay and Minang language than speak in Indonesian language). Besides that the ability to operate IT (Information and Technology) especially computer or laptop (including all its applications) is also must be mastered by the society of Teluk Meranti.

Table 1  
Existing Condition of Society in Bono Tourism Development<sup>a</sup>

Aspects	Problems	Actors
Social and cultural	a. Cultural shock because there are many foreign tourists who come to Teluk Meranti b. Permissive culture of the society which do not fit with the context	Government through Toga, Toma and traditional institutions
Human resources	a. Life skill of the society is still low b. Orientation and work ethic of the society is low c. The education level is low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government</li> <li>• Business/Corporate</li> <li>• NGO's</li> </ul>
Economic	a. The majority of the society works as farmer b. Business capital is limited c. The thread of capitalist economy because the coming of foreign investors d. Available employment is few and homogeneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government</li> <li>• Business/Corporate</li> </ul>
Environment	a. Environment pollution from people's residue material b. Irregular spatial that reduces the level of water catchment from Kampar river c. Other natural potential in Teluk Meranti has not been arranged and managed properly d. Accessibility is still difficult to reach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government</li> <li>• NGO's</li> <li>• Business/Corporate</li> </ul>

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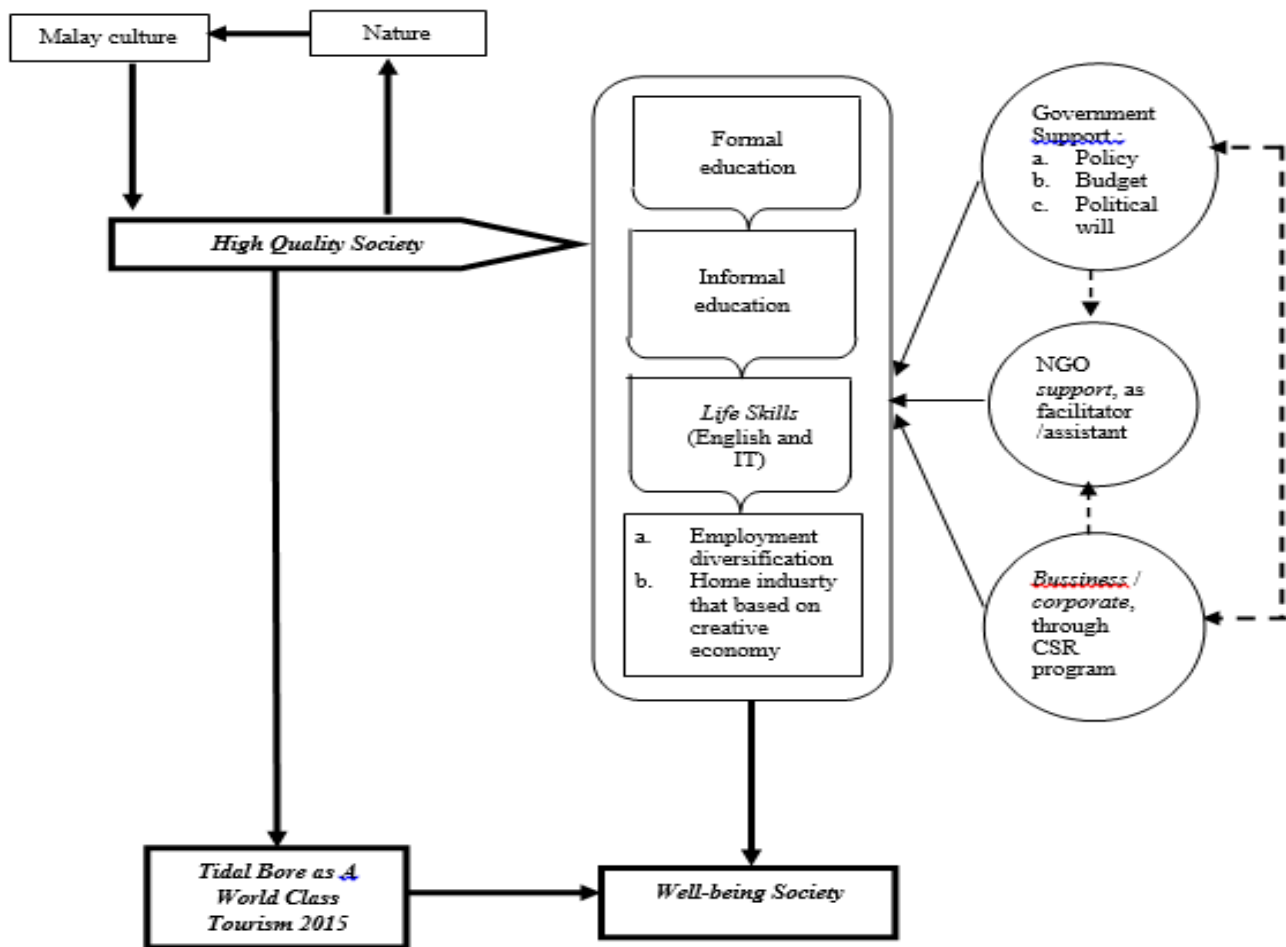


Fig. 1. Society empowerment model in facing tourism development of Teluk Meranti.  
Source : FGD, 2014

In this case, young generations can take this position for their self quality improvement in facing the development of tourism in Teluk Meranti. Why Information Technology (IT) is needed? Because the majority of tourists who come are the typical of information society who still need access to data and information although their purpose to come to Teluk Meranti is for vacation. In short, they still need access to IT during their vacation.

Furthermore, by mastering IT, people can use IT as promotion media of tourism in Teluk Meranti, for example through social media such as facebook and twitter. What happens now is actually the use of social media as promotion media has been done by the people of Teluk Meranti, it can be seen from many accounts such as @bonosurfing, @wisatabono, @pelalawan2rism, etc. but if it is seen from the recent update and also the number of followers, those accounts have not been managed maximally. Whereas those accounts actually can be effective promotion media, considering that the average of tourists of bono is young people who are familiar with technology.

With supporting life skills, the society can create various new employments besides in agricultural sector.

Employment diversification created by society of Teluk Meranti and intended for society of Teluk Meranti itself (furthermore for society outside Teluk Meranti) significantly will also ignite creativity and innovation of society to create new things that can be sold to Bono tourists.

Those creativity and innovation are not only in form of tangible goods but also can be developed into creative economy in form of service, such as forming world level network which cover or data people who plan to surf in Bono. That virtual link will coordinate and communicate all information needed about Bono to potential tourists and connect them one another without any physical meeting.

All forms of above society empowerment are directed to increase the prosperity level of Teluk Meranti's society so they can be more prosperous than their condition now. Therefore, the philosophy of tourism development that is develop is bono tourism become world class tourism which can create prosperity for the society of Teluk Meranti.

However, all forms of above society empowerment will not run smoothly without the parties who become intervener, whether as facilitator, implementer or just donor or trigger the course of society empowerment activity. The

role of government is also important to give support in form of policy, budget, and also political will.

The role of private sectors can be applied through CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility). The involvement of Non Government Organization (NGO) as facilitator and assistant of the society empowerment is still having not been done.

The NGO that can be involved is WALHI. Where actually the steps and forms of natural tourism development which environment friendly and consider environment conservation can be discovered from WALHI. Government and private sectors can cooperate directly or give their support through that NGO. So, the one who move and go down more to the society is the NGO which has agreement or MoU with government or private sectors which commit for bono tourism development.

After formulating society empowerment model that based on bono tourism development, this study tries to operate that society empowerment model in form of real activity operational which can be done by the government of Pelalawan regency. In the context of society empowerment that based on bono tourism, the most potential agency to be a leader is tourism department of Pelalawan regency.

Before the society given many kinds of treatments, government need to build effective communication with the society to discuss, to place and to explain what are the rights of society of Teluk Meranti (in the context of bono

tourism development). The explanation of the basic rights of society of Teluk Meranti will bear moral responsibility and also legal responsibility at the same time.

Moral responsibility concerns with how far is the awareness level of society of Teluk Meranti to the environments and all of potentials. Legal responsibility is in implementation of formal obligation form that have been agreed in the position of citizens who obey to public policies from government.

## 2. 2. The resistances in the development of Bono tourism

Furthermore, this study identifies many kinds of resistances and potential which appear in the development of Bono tourism efforts. Those resistances manifest into two types of resistances, they are latent resistance and manifest resistance.

### 2.2.1. Latent resistance

Cultural shock is very possible to happen in the society of Teluk Meranti considering there is intensification of bono tourism development that have to be done by the government of Pelalawan regency through tourism department of Pelalawan regency. The comprehensive intensification of bono tourism will be accompanied by increasing number of tourists visit to Teluk Meranti and increasing number of mobilization turn out of society with many kinds of interests in Teluk Meranti.

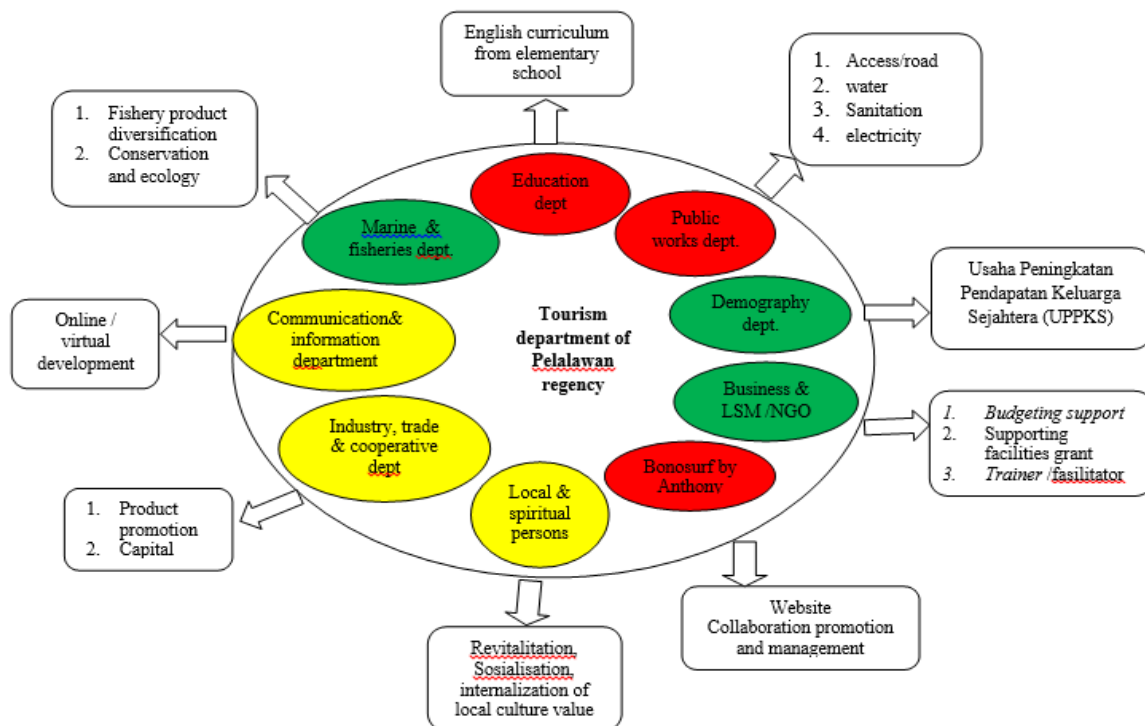


Fig. 2. Collaborative government in society empowerment based on Bono tourism.

Source : FGD, 2014

Cultural shock happens when there are many effects and outside values that came and diffused into local society. Those outside values and effects absolutely have significant difference especially values and effects which are brought by foreign tourists. In fact, the numbers of foreign tourists are more than the number of local tourists.

### 2.2.2. *Manifest resistance*

So far, the resistance pattern which has open characteristic has not been appeared from the society. But undirected assistance and development in Bono tourism will make latent resistance becomes open and manifest

However, there are some concerns from public figures that explicitly concern that the development of bono tourism will make destruction for environment, the existence of land speculators and moral decadence of teenagers. This condition is marked with some refusals and reluctances from society to sell their land to outside parties (speculators). These speculators try to get profit from the society.

## 3. Conclusions

From the result of the study, this study simply focuses on two main problems, about empowerment and resistance as effect of Bono tourism development. The study finds that:

- Capacity building is urgently required. The capacity building includes two things (a) improve society's formal education level, (b) increase informal education institution and its accessibility. By increasing quality and quantity of formal and informal education, it is expected that it will give skill and expertise for society
- Result of the study shows that latent resistance in the society empowerment that based on bono tourism has not been really occurring. However, cultural shock is very possible to occur because there is intensification of bono tourism development that have to be done by the government of Pelalawan regency through its tourism department. Comprehensive intensification of bono tourism development will increase the number of tourists who visit to Teluk Meranti, and will increase

the turnout of society mobilization with various kinds of interests in Teluk Meranti.

- According to the result of the study, the most possible recommendation that can be developed is the involvement of multi stakeholders in the tourism development in Pelalawan regency. Government as the executor and parliament as the legislator must urge and arrange the involvement of related stakeholders, private and NGO synergistically to develop capacity model that has been made in this study.

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